

MEMORIAL  
OF  
R. R. GURLEY,

PRATING

*The purchase of Catlin's collection of paintings and curiosities illustrative of the manners and customs of the North American Indians.*

JULY 10, 1848.—Referred to the Committee on the Library.

JULY 18, 1848.—Ordered to be printed.

*To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States:*

The undersigned respectfully represents that his friend, Mr. George Catlin, a citizen of the United States, now in London, on the 5th of June, 1846, presented a memorial to Congress, stating that by the earnest labors of eight entire years of his life, and at an expense of more than \$20,000, he had obtained a unique collection of Indian portraits, customs, costumes, and weapons; that this collection includes about 600 paintings, from forty-eight different Indian tribes, with the most rare, curious, and valuable specimens of dresses, weapons, and other manufactures of the North American Indians, that have ever been made; that among these pictures are forty full-length portraits of Indians completely costumed, and colored from life, the heads of which are fac-simile casts of distinguished Indians on the frontier; that all are the productions of the memorialist; and that in addition, are nearly two tons weight of minerals and fossils of great interest, brought from the Indian regions of America. That the memorialist, during his protracted and arduous exertions, had been stimulated by a laudable ambition of making this collection the nucleus of a museum of mankind, to contain eventually the records, and resemblances, and manufactures of all the vanishing races of men on the globe; and that he had been supported by the hope of being enabled, under the patronage of his own government, to complete a pictorial history of those interesting tribes of aborigines who will, at no very remote period, have yielded up their country and their existence to more civilized men, and leave it to be preserved as the property of said government, for the benefit of future generations, in the Metropolis of the Union.

Distinguished American citizens and artists in Paris and London, as well as in our own cities, have united in earnest petitions to Congress that some measures might be adopted which would restore this valuable collection to our country, and fix it amongst its records. "Interesting (say the American artists of Paris) to our countrymen generally, it is absolutely necessary to American artists. The Italian, who wishes to portray the his-

Tippin & Streeper, printers.

tory of Rome, finds remnants of her sons in the Vatican; the French artist can study the ancient Gauls in the museums of the Louvre; and the Tower of London is rich in the armour and weapons of the Saxon race.

"Your memorialists, therefore, most respectfully trust that Mr. Catlin's collection may be purchased and cherished by the federal government, as a nucleus for a national museum, where American artists may freely study that bold race who once held possession of our country, and who are so fast disappearing before the tide of civilization. Without such a collection, few of the glorious pages of our early history can be illustrated; while the use made of it here, by French artists, in recording upon canvass the American discoveries of their countrymen in the last century, shows its importance."

Our distinguished countryman, Professor Morse, (whose taste and abilities as an artist are only eclipsed by his greatest and most astonishing discovery of modern times,) observes: "When it is considered that this collection will ere long contain nearly all that remains of the Indian race—a race that once owned the soil we now occupy—and that their domestic history and habits are in a great degree embodied and embalmed in this unique assemblage, I do hope sincerely that Congress will rescue it from destruction, and preserve it unbroken in some of our public institutions." Mr. Healy (whose reputation as an artist is not less well established in Europe than in the United States) says, "I entirely concur with Professor Morse (and all other artists) in the hope that Congress may secure to our country this precious collection, that it may be made the nucleus of a National Gallery, which in time may be to every American, and especially to every American artist, what the Vatican is to the Italian, the Louvre to the Frenchman, and the Tower of London to the men of England." The undersigned would further respectfully represent that, in the session of 1837 and 1838, a resolution on the subject of the purchase of this collection was introduced into the House of Representatives, and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs; that a report for its purchase was prepared by the honorable chairman, (now a member of the Senate,) but, owing to the near approach of the close of the session, was not considered. The Regents of the Smithsonian Institution having, by resolution, agreed to give this collection a place, and to preserve it in their Gallery of Art, a second report was made in the House of Representatives, favorable to its purchase, by the Hon. Mr. Campbell, of New York, of the Committee on the Library. Well assured of the intense anxiety of Mr. Catlin that this collection may belong to the government of his own country, and that the exertions of his whole lifetime may be devoted to its enlargement; highly appreciating his great abilities as an artist, which, combined with his distinguished patriotism and philanthropy and every private virtue, have won for him universal respect abroad, as well as at home, and apprehensive that, without some speedy action on the part of this government, this invaluable collection may be forever lost to the country, the undersigned respectfully and earnestly prays that an appropriation may be made for its purchase, the whole amount to be paid therefor not to exceed fifty thousand dollars.

All which is respectfully submitted.

R. R. GURLEY.

WASHINGTON, July 6, 1848.

MEMORIAL OF GEORGE CATLIN, PRAYING CONGRESS TO PURCHASE HIS  
COLLECTION OF INDIAN PORTRAITS AND CURIOSITIES.

*To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:*

The subscriber, a citizen of the United States, and now in the city of Paris, begs leave most respectfully to represent:

That his extensive and unique *collection of Indian portraits, customs, costumes, weapons, &c.*, the extent and interest of which are known to most of your honorable body, and which cost your memorialist the entire exertions of eight years of his life, and an expenditure of more than 20,000 dollars in collecting, is now in Paris; and, under the flattering patronage of the King, has, for more than two months past, occupied a large gallery in the Louvre, for the private views of the royal family and royal guests; that, in making this collection, the subscriber received no government or individual aid, but, entirely unaided, has pursued and completed his object, supported by the ambition of procuring a full and complete pictorial history of a numerous and interesting race of human beings rapidly sinking into oblivion, encouraged with the confident belief that the collection would be eventually appropriated and protected by the government of his own country as a monument to a race of people who will soon have yielded up their country and their existence to cultivating man; that the subscriber, several years since, crossed the Atlantic with his collection, not with a view to alienate himself from his native country, nor to change the nationality of his collection, but to seek support for a numerous and expensive family from its exhibitions in London and Paris; that the best evidence of the interest with which his works have been received, and the value that has been set upon his collection in Europe, is the fact that several very respectable offers have been made for it, but which he has been unwilling to accept until the government of his own country shall have had the opportunity of adding the collection to the records of the nation, which opportunity it is the object of this memorial to afford; that the collection contains nearly 600 paintings of portraiture and customs of forty-eight different tribes, and the most extensive and valuable collection of costumes, weapons, and other manufactures of the North American Indians, that has ever been made—to the latter department of which several very valuable collections have been added in England, by purchase—and the paintings have been ultimately completed, and all arranged in durable and appropriate frames; that the collection will also contain, when fully arranged, forty full-length figures of Indians completely costumed, the heads of which are *fac simile* casts, from the life of distinguished Indians on the frontier, and colored from nature; and, besides these, there are nearly two tons weight of minerals and fossils of an interesting character, brought from the Indian regions in America.

Your memorialist further represents that, during the whole time he has been laboring to make this collection, he has been stimulated by the ambition of making it the nucleus of a *museum of mankind*, to contain eventually the records, resemblances, and manufactures of all the diminishing races of native tribes in various parts of the globe; that the very flattering and advantageous proposals now offered to your memorialist for the foundation of such an institution on this side of the Atlantic, and the

contemplation of the vigorous part of his life passing away, and which it is his desire yet to devote to the full accomplishment of his design, are considerations producing in his mind extreme anxiety at present for some expression, if possible, during the present session of the Congress of his own country; that, in the session of 1837 and 1838, a resolution on the subject of its purchase was introduced into the House of Representatives by the Hon. Mr. Briggs, of Massachusetts, which resolution was referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs, of which committee the Hon. Mr. Bell, of Tennessee, was chairman, and which committee, your memorialist believes, prepared a unanimous report in favor of the purchase, but which report, too near to the close of the session, was never acted upon.

Your humble memorialist would, therefore, most respectfully propose at this time (as the certain means of restoring the collection to the United States, and of securing the ambitious exertions of the lifetime of its author for its enlargement) the sale of the entire collection as above named, to the government of the United States, for the sum of \$65,000—the same sum proposed to the committee in 1837 and 1838, and subject to the conditions then named. And for some early expression of your honorable body on this proposition your humble memorialist will ever pray.

GEO. CATLIN.

LOUVRE, PARIS, OR PLACE MADELEINE 21,

April 2, 1846.

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#### MEMORIAL OF AMERICAN ARTISTS IN PARIS.

*To the honorable the Speaker and House of Representatives of the United States:*

We, the undersigned artists, citizens of the United States now in Paris, beg leave most respectfully to represent, that, feeling a deep interest in the collection and protection of works of art, and particularly those illustrating the history of our country, we are looking with some solicitude to the permanent destination of the noble collection of Indian portraits, costumes, &c., of Mr. Catlin, now in this city, where it has been highly eulogized by the King and the most distinguished artists and men of science; and which, we understand, has been submitted by its author for the consideration of your honorable body during the present session of the Congress of the United States.

Having made ourselves fully acquainted with the extent and interest of this unique collection, and of its *peculiar* interest to our country; and also aware of the encouraging offers now made to its proprietor for its permanent establishment in England, as well as the desire generally manifested here to have it added to the Historical Gallery of Versailles, we have ventured to unite in the joint expression of our anxiety that the members of the present Congress may pass some resolution that may be the means of restoring so valuable a collection to our country, and fixing it there amongst its records.

Interesting to our countrymen generally, it is absolutely necessary to American artists.

The Italian who wishes to portray the history of Rome, finds rem-



nants of her sons in the Vatican; the French artist can study the ancient Gauls in the museums of the Louvre; and the Tower of London is rich in the armour and weapons of the Saxon race.

Your memorialists, therefore, most respectfully trust that Mr. Catlin's collection may be purchased and cherished by the federal government, as a nucleus for a national museum, where American artists may freely study that bold race who once held possession of our country, and who are so fast disappearing before the tide of civilization. Without such a collection, few of the glorious pages of our early history can be illustrated, while the use made of it here by French artists, in recording upon canvass the American discoveries of their countrymen in the last century, shows its importance.

The acquisition of the collection will also secure to our country the continued services of its author, whose ambition seems to be still to labor for its enlargement, and whose ability to do so with success, and with profit to his country, we think is well attested by the collection he has made, by years of toil, and often hardship, entirely unaided by public or private patronage. And your memorialists will ever pray.

JNO. VANDERLYN.  
THOS. P. ROSSITER.  
BENJ. CHAMNEY.  
WM. M. HUNT.  
WM. C. ALLAN.  
GEO. C. MASON.  
W. B. CHAMBERS.  
H. WILLARD.  
THOS. HICKS.  
J. F. KENSETT.  
C. G. EDWARDS.

PARIS, May 14, 1846.

#### MEMORIAL OF AMERICAN CITIZENS RESIDENT IN LONDON.

*To the honorable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives :*

We, the undersigned, citizens of the United States now residing in London, beg leave most respectfully to represent, that, feeling a deep interest in the collection, preservation, and protection of works of art, of literature, records, and whatever may illustrate the early history of our country, we are looking with much solicitude upon the valuable Indian collection of Mr. Catlin, which is now in Paris, and which we understand has been recently submitted, by its proprietor, for the consideration of your honorable body at this session of Congress.

Taking into consideration the great extent of Mr. Catlin's unique collection, and its peculiar interest to our country, above all others, and being aware of the encouraging proposals made to its proprietor for its permanent establishment in Europe, we cheerfully unite in this joint expression of our wishes that the present Congress will adopt such measures as will

not only insure the return of this valuable collection to the United States, but secure the services of Mr. Catlin in enlarging and perfecting it.

LOUIS McLANE.

THOS. ASPINWALL.

GEORGE PEABODY.

GEO. WASHINGTON ATWOOD.

E. J. COATES.

CHAS. BARING LANDER.

R. HOWE GOULD.

A. B. QUINBY.

H. MACKAY.

CHARLES WELFORD.

GEORGE PALMER PUTNAM.

JOHN LORD.

THOMAS DELF.

HENRY STEVENS.

T. BURROWS HYDE.

*Report of the Joint Committee on the Library, in relation to the purchase of Catlin's Indian Gallery.—July 24, 1846.*

The Joint Committee on the Library, to whom was referred the memorial of Mr. Catlin, for the purchase of his Gallery of Indian Collections and Paintings; and also the memorial of American artists abroad, and of American citizens resident in London, respectfully report:

That of Mr. Catlin, who desires to place, on certain conditions, his extensive collection of Indian portraits, costumes, and other objects of interest connected with Indian life, in the possession of the government, it is hardly necessary to speak, since his reputation is established throughout this country and Europe. A native of the State of Pennsylvania, his early studies were directed to the law, which, under an impulse of enthusiasm that often marks original genius, he soon abandoned for the pencil, stimulated by desire to give to his country exact and spirited representations of the persons, costumes, ceremonies, and homes of the aboriginal inhabitants of this continent, now retreating and gradually vanishing away before the power of civilization. Nor did he devote himself to his enterprises merely to gratify curiosity and preserve memorials of a bold, independent, and remarkable race of men, but to direct attention to certain lofty traits of their character, and excite, generally, friendly sentiments and efforts for their benefit. In making this collection, he expended eight entire years of his life and 20,000 dollars, and visited, often at great hazard of his personal safety, more than forty different (and most of them remote) tribes. Unaided by public or private patronage, he pursued and effected his object, sustained, as he observes, by the ambition of procuring a full and complete pictorial history of a numerous and interesting race of human beings, rapidly sinking into oblivion, and encouraged by the belief that the collection would finally be appropriated and protected by the government of his own country, as a monument to a race once sole proprietors of this

country, but who will soon have yielded up, and with it probably their existence also, to civilized man.

On Mr. Catlin's return from the western prairies, the attention of Congress was, in 1837 and 1838, turned towards his collection, and a resolution for its purchase was moved in the House, and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs, who, it is understood, expressed in their report a unanimous opinion in favor of the purchase, though the near approach of the close of the session prevented its being submitted for consideration.

In transferring his collection to Europe, Mr. Catlin had no intention of alienating it, or changing its nationality and destination; but, by its exhibition, sought to secure support for his family, and obtain means of bringing out his great and expensive work on the Indians—a work which has thrown much light upon their character and customs, and been received with distinguished favor on both sides of the Atlantic.

The judgment of our citizens, and that of eminent foreigners, is concurrent in regard to the value of this collection for the illustration of our history, and as a work of art. By desire of the King of France, it now occupies a gallery in the Louvre, and has been highly eulogized by the most distinguished artists and men of science in Paris. A large gold medal has been presented to Mr. Catlin by the King of the Belgians, with a letter expressing a high opinion of his productions.

The American artists now in Paris, in a memorial addressed to Congress, urging the importance of securing this collection to our country, say:

“Having made ourselves acquainted with the extent and interest of this unique collection, and of its peculiar interest to our country; and also aware of the encouraging offers now made to its proprietor for its permanent establishment in England, as well as the desire generally manifested here to have it added to the Historical Gallery of Versailles, we have ventured to unite in the joint expression of our anxiety that the members of the present Congress may pass some resolution that may be the means of restoring so valuable a collection to our country, and fixing it among its records. Interesting to our countrymen generally, it is absolutely necessary to American artists. The Italian who wishes to portray the history of Rome, finds remnants of her sons in the Vatican; The French artist can study the ancient Gauls in the museums of the Louvre; and the Tower of London is rich in the armour and weapons of the Saxon race.

“Your memorialists, therefore, most respectfully trust that Mr. Catlin's collection may be purchased and cherished by the federal government, as a nucleus for a national museum, where American artists may freely study that bold race who once held possession of our country, and who are so fast disappearing before the tide of civilization. Without such a collection, few of the glorious pages of our early history can be illustrated; while the use made of it here by French artists, in recording upon canvass the American discoveries of their countrymen in the last century, shows its importance.”

Your committee feel the justice of these sentiments of American artists, and also the importance, as suggested in their memorial, of securing, by the purchase of his collection, the future efforts of Mr. Catlin for its enlargement. Let the government appropriate his collection, and the chief ambition of its author's life will be realized, and he will be enabled, in a few years, to double it in value and extent.

The bill which has recently passed the House for the establishment of

the Smithsonian Institution provides that there shall belong to it a "gallery of art;" and of course it must be intended that such gallery shall be occupied by works of art. That such works should be principally American, is the obvious dictate of patriotism. No productions, your committee believe, at present exist, more appropriate to this gallery than those of Mr. Catlin, or of equal importance. Should Congress fail to act on this subject, or decide unfavorably to Mr. Catlin's proposal, he may, notwithstanding his reluctance, be compelled to accept the positive and advantageous offers now made to him in England.

The love of art, and respect for those who have cultivated it with success, especially for those who have illustrated, by their productions, the history of their country, have ever been cherished by the most civilized nations. It has been justly observed, that "among the Greeks the arts were not so much objects to promote gratification as of public interest; they were employed as the most powerful stimulants of piety and patriotism, commissioned to confer distinction upon those who were conspicuous for valor, for wisdom, and for virtue. A statue or picture gave celebrity to a city or a state, and a great artist was considered a national ornament—a public benefactor, whom all were bound to honor and reward."

Your committee believe the price of his collection, as named by Mr. Catlin, is moderate, and that a failure to obtain it would occasion deep regret to all the friends of art, and to all Americans who reasonably and justly desire to preserve memorials of the Indian race, or the means by which our future artists and historians may illustrate the great and most interesting events in the early periods and progress of our country.

The committee, therefore, recommend that the bill for the establishment of the Smithsonian Institute be so amended as that provision shall be made therein for the purchase of Mr. Catlin's gallery at the price mentioned by him—namely, sixty-five thousand dollars—payable in annual instalments of ten thousand dollars.

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*Letter from Professor Morse.*

NEW YORK, June 27, 1846.

DEAR SIR: Yours respecting the Catlin collection of Indian curiosities I have just received, and I most cheerfully coincide in the opinion of the distinguished gentlemen who have already expressed a favorable decision in regard to its great value, and importance to the country. Mr. Catlin deserves, to say the least, the small sum which he asks for his labor of years, had these labors been less successful; but when it is considered that his collection will ere long contain nearly all that remains of the Indian race—a race that once owned the soil we now occupy—and that their domestic history, and habits, are in a great degree embodied and embalmed in this unique assemblage, I do hope sincerely that Congress will rescue it from destruction, and preserve it unbroken in some of our public institutions.

I hope to see you again in Washington in a few days; and in the mean time thanking you for your kindness to me, and the interest you have taken in my success, *telegraphically* and *pictorially*, I remain, with sincere respect and esteem, your friend and servant,

SAML. F. B. MORSE.

R. R. GURLEY, Esq.



*Letter from George P. A. Healy.*

WASHINGTON, July 2, 1846.

MY DEAR SIR: I have read with pleasure Professor Morse's letter to you respecting Mr. Catlin's extensive and unique collection of Indian portraits, customs, costumes, &c., the extent and interest of which are now known to the Old as well as to the New world, through the characteristic energy of our distinguished countryman, its author. I entirely concur with Professor Morse (and all other artists) in the hope that Congress may secure to our country this precious collection—aye, and that, too, this very session—that it may be made the nucleus of a National Gallery, which in time may be to every American, and especially to every American artist, what the Vatican is to the Italian, the Louvre to the Frenchman, and the Tower of London to the men of England.

Permit me to add, sir, that I personally witnessed in London the excitement produced by Mr. Catlin's exhibition. Mr. Leslie and Mr. Mulready, whom I consider two of the greatest living artists, said to me that every painter should see Mr. Catlin's works. They added, "We consider them as possessing very great artistic merit."

I have the honor to remain, my dear sir, your most obedient servant,  
GEO. P. A. HEALY.

R. R. GURLEY, Esq.

*Letter from General Cass.*

LEGATION DES ETATS UNIS, PARIS,  
December 8, 1841.

DEAR SIR: No man can appreciate better than myself the admirable fidelity of your drawings and book, which I have lately received. They are equally spirited and accurate: they are true to nature. Things that *are*, are not sacrificed, as they too often are by the painter, to things as (in his judgment) they should be.

During eighteen years of my life, I was superintendent of Indian affairs in the northwestern territory of the United States; and during more than five, I was Secretary of War, to which department belongs the general control of Indian concerns. I know the Indians thoroughly. I have spent many a month in their camps, council-houses, villages, and hunting grounds; I have fought with them, and against them; and I have negotiated seventeen treaties of peace or of cession with them. I mention these circumstances to show you that I have a good right to speak confidently upon the subject of your drawings. Among them I recognise many of my old acquaintances, and everywhere I am struck with the vivid representations of them and their customs, of their peculiar features, and of their costumes. Unfortunately, they are receding before the advancing tide of our population, and are probably destined, at no distant day, wholly to disappear; but your collection will preserve them, as far as human art can do, and will form the most perfect monument of an extinguished race that the world has ever seen.

LEWIS CASS.

GEO. CATLIN.

## TESTIMONIALS.

From the London Quarterly Review.

As a man of science, of enterprise, and of true philanthropy, he (Mr. Catlin) is justly entitled to be considered as a citizen of the world; and, although he reflects especial honor upon the intelligent nation to which he is so proud to declare that he owes his birth, yet, for that very reason, we are confident a generous feeling will universally exist to receive him with liberality here.

From the London Times.

The numerous portraits are full of character: they exhibit an almost endless variety of feature, though all bearing a generical resemblance to each other. The views of combats are very full of spirit, and exhibit modes of warfare and destruction horribly illustrative of savage life. The method of attacking buffaloes and other monsters of the plains and forests are all interesting; the puny process of a fox chase sinks into insignificance when compared with the tremendous excitement occasioned by the grappling of a bear or the butting of a bison. These scenes are all accurately depicted, not in the finished style of modern art, but with a vigor and fidelity of outline which arises from the painter having actually beheld what he transmits to canvass.

From the London Spectator.

Mr. Catlin is an enterprising American artist, who has devoted eight years to the delineation of scenes and persons, and the collection of objects to form a permanent record of the characteristic features and customs of the different tribes of Indians in North America, now fast becoming extinct by the combined operation of smallpox, spirit drinking and war.

The scenery on the Missouri and Mississippi is remarkable for the mixture of beauty and desolation, and an appearance of cultivation in the wildest parts. Mr. Catlin's views bear the impress of fidelity that belongs to pictures painted on the spot; and their freshness and characteristic spirit more than atone for any defects of execution. The scenes of buffalo-hunting are full of movement and energy; and the groups of Indians are sketched with so much life and action, that the scene appears to pass before you. Numerous certificates attest the accuracy of the portraits and views. The robes and the tent covering exhibit some curious specimens of the pictorial skill of the Indians, which reminds one of the Egyptian and Mexican paintings; the outline being strongly defined, and with attention to the characteristic points. The dresses are very tastefully decorated with beads, feathers, and skins; and the pipes, war-clubs, lances, bows, quivers, and shields are profusely ornamented: the cradles are really beautiful.

From the London Art Union.

*Mr. Catlin's Indian Gallery.*

Circumstances have hitherto prevented our noticing this most admirable exhibition; but we have examined it in all its parts with very minute at-

tention, and have been highly gratified, as well as much informed, by doing so. Mr. Catlin's collection is by no means to be classed among the ephemeral amusements of the day; it is a work of deep and permanent interest. Perceiving that the rapid destruction of the aboriginal tribes by war, disease, and the baneful influence of spirituous liquors, would soon cause all traces of the red men to be lost, Mr. Catlin determined on proceeding through their still untrodden wildernesses, for the purpose of gaining an intimate acquaintance with their manners and customs, and of procuring an exact delineation of their persons, features, ceremonies, &c., all which he has faithfully and perfectly accomplished at no small hazard of life and limb. It was not a common mind that could have conceived so bold a project, nor is he a common man who has so thoroughly accomplished it.

The arms, dresses, domestic implements, &c. &c., collected by the industry of this most energetic of explorers, are precisely as they have been manufactured and used by their Indian owners, and form a collection which every succeeding year will render more and more valuable. The portraits of distinguished warriors, &c., the representations of religious ceremonies, war dances, buffalo hunts, &c. &c., are depicted by Mr. Catlin himself, and that with a force and evident truth that bring the whole detail of Indian life in eloquent reality before the eyes of the spectator. We have no hesitation in saying that this gallery supplies the most effective and valuable means for acquiring an exact acquaintance with the great American continent that has ever been offered to the hunger and thirst after knowledge, so prevailing a characteristic of the age.

From the Morning Chronicle.

### *The Aboriginal Tribes of North America.*

A pictorial exhibition of a singularly interesting description has just been opened in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. It consists of portraits, landscapes, costumes, and other representations of the persons, manners, and customs of the North American Indians, painted by Mr. Catlin, an American artist, during eight years' travel amongst their various tribes.

On Monday a numerous assemblage, comprising many distinguished members of the fashionable as well as the literary world, visited this extraordinary collection, and listened with the utmost curiosity and interest to the details and explanations given by Mr. Catlin in illustration of some of its most remarkable objects.

Mr. Catlin modestly apologizes for the unfinished character of his pictures, considered as works of art. They are sketches rapidly and roughly executed, as might be expected from the circumstances under which they were made; but they are freely drawn with a strong tone of color; and being drawn and colored immediately from nature, there is a graphic truthfulness about them which places, as it were, the very objects themselves before the eye of the spectator, and fills the imagination with images of these ancient lords of the western continent, now reduced to scattered remnants and fast disappearing from the earth, a thousand times more distinct and vivid than could be produced by volumes of description.

From Kidd's London Journal.

*Catlin's Indian Gallery, Egyptian Hall.*

By a visit to this exhibition, every class of the community, old as well as young, will derive much instruction and gratification. Mr. Catlin's representation of the red races of North America, their country, their costumes, their sports, their religious ceremonies, and, in short, their manners and customs, so as to enable us to form a complete idea of them, is deserving of the utmost praise. There are above five hundred subjects in these spacious rooms, from a wigwam to a child's rattle; and everything belonging to the various Indian tribes are before the spectator in their actual condition and integrity. There are, besides, a multitude of portraits of the leading warriors, &c. &c., and other pictures of dances, ball play, ambuscading, fighting; the whole supplying by far the most ample and accurate history of them that has ever been published to the world. No book of travels can approach these realities; and after all we had read of the red men, we confess we are astonished at the many new and important points connected with them which this gallery impressed upon us. We saw more distinctly the links of resemblance between them and other early and distant people; and we had comparisons suggested of a multitude of matters affecting the progress of mankind all over the earth, alike illustrated by similitudes and dissimilitudes.

From the United States Gazette.

*Catlin's Indian Gallery.*

The conception and plan of this gallery are in a high degree ingenious and philosophical. While it seems to the careless visitor to be only a very animated representation of some of the most striking incidents in Indian life, it is in fact so contrived as to contain an intelligent and profound exposition of all that characterizes the savage in mind, in memory, and in manners; a revelation of the form and qualities of his understanding, of the shape and temper of his passions, of his religious impressions and the traditions which have given them their hue, and of the mingled ferocity and fun, barbarity and *bon hommie*, which streak his character. These are the matters that are brought out by a study of these pictures; and they show, on the part of the originator of this museum, a comprehension and reach of understanding which of themselves merit the name of genius. The execution is as happy as the purpose is judicious. No artist in this country possesses a readier or more graphic pencil; perhaps no one, since Hogarth, has had in so high a degree the faculty of seizing at a moment the true impression of a scene before his eyes, and transferring it to the canvass. And as a refined and finished portrait painter, his large picture of Osceola alone sets him on a level with the most accomplished professors in any part of the States, and shows what eminence and what emolument might have been achieved by him had he devoted himself to that narrower branch of his art. The great and unshared merit of these sketches lies in the circumstance that there is nothing either in the grouping or the detail in anywise imaginary, but that every scene which his collection contains was copied by him from life, while the original was before him. Of the tribes thus represented, some



have already, in the interval since these drawings, been entirely swept away from the earth ; and it is plain that others, who escape that fate, will, as they are more nearly approached by the whites, lose much that is distinctive in their character and habits, and in a few, probably a very few years, the only memorial of the bravery, the sufferings, the toils, sports, customs, dresses, and decorations of the Indians, will be Catlin's Gallery.

We feel great pride in stating that Mr. Catlin is a native of Pennsylvania. His birth place, we are informed, is the valley of the Wyoming. There, probably, he acquired that fondness for the free wild life of the huntsman and forester, that has led him so far from the tame continuance of cities, and has made the privations of that remote existence tolerable. There, too, he must have imbibed in early youth that love of the chase, and that sympathy with its noble excitements, which has made him out of sight the best exhibitor of the sports of the west that ever yet employed pen or pencil in illustration of the magnificent diversions that gave a dash of sublimity to the occupation of those dwellers by the sources of the Father of Waters. We too have seen something of that stirring western life, and have had a taste of its delights and dangers, though we pretend not to a tithe of the lore here brought out.

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Upon the whole, Mr. Catlin has accomplished a work which will forever associate his name in the highest rank of honor, with a subject that will interest the civilized world every year more and more through all coming time.

From the Philadelphia Gazette.

### *Catlin's Indian Gallery.*

We cannot notice this collection too often. It is one of those productions which illustrate, in an eminent degree, the observation of Playfair, that when the proper time has arrived for some great work to be performed, some individual is raised up by Providence, whose position, and character, and capacity precisely fit him for accomplishing the design. For reasons that will be appreciated by the philosopher, the philanthropist, and the theologian, as well as considerations that address themselves to the curiosity of the man of general knowledge, it was particularly desirable that a full and authentic record should be given to the world of the national characteristics of a race whose history is so peculiar, whose condition is so curious, and whose speedy extinguishment is so certain, as those of the North American Indians. Accordingly, when it is plain that the moment has arrived beyond which the portraiture of their state cannot any longer be delayed, if it would be known that they are in that native predicament which has been in nowise modified by European intercourse, a man appears whose birth in a spot of which the traditions are so strongly interfused with the memory of the Indian, (the Wyoming Valley,) has caused his imagination to be deeply impressed, even from his earliest youth, by the character and actions of this people, who is endowed by nature with the hand and eye of a painter, and who passes through a professional education which advances his talent, to the skill of an accomplished artist, and who has inherited a fortitude of spirit, an elevation of purpose, and a vigor of limb, which render him competent to encounter

the dangers, the discouragements, and the difficulties which of necessity lie along the path to the object in question. The man is willing to devote the best years of his life to the task of working out a great picture of those tribes of savages which are separated by 2,000 miles from the farthest settlement of his nation.

One of the most remarkable tribes which has yet been found on this continent, was that of the Mandans. They were more advanced in the knowledge of domestic comforts, and were distinguished for more intelligence and a higher sense of honor, than any of their brethren. They possessed certain very extraordinary and interesting annual religious celebrations, which were in part a commemoration of the deluge, and contained, amongst other things, an allusion to the twig which the dove brought back from Noah to the earth. Mr. Catlin was the first white man who was ever admitted to inspect these ceremonies in the sacred hall in which they were performed for four days. He made several large and very copious paintings of the scenes which were presented to him; and he sketched almost all that was striking in the character of this tribe. The next year the whole of this nation was swept away by the smallpox. Not an individual man, woman, or child survives; and the world possesses no other knowledge of this people or their traditions than is contained in these pictures in the gallery of Catlin. Fortunately, they present us with as full and satisfactory a representation as could be desired.

*Mr. Catlin's Gallery of Indian Paintings.*—We congratulate our citizens on the opportunity they have now presented to them of witnessing the results of Mr. Catlin's labors and travels among the tribes of aborigines inhabiting the Rocky mountains and the prairies of "the far west." Mr. Catlin spent many years among these tribes, at the imminent risk of his life, and at an incalculable cost of comfort, solely with the view of taking likenesses and sketches from life and nature, and of representing these "children of the forest" in their own peculiar costumes, and as he found them in their own native wilds.

Of the accuracy of his likenesses, we have the most undoubted testimony; and of the sketches of scenery, dances, hunting parties, &c., we may venture to say they are graphic, bold, and free. We know of nothing from which one who has never seen the Indian in his untamed character can derive so accurate a knowledge of these fast-disappearing natives of the soil, as from this gallery.

From the New York Evening Star.

#### *Catlin's Indian Gallery.*

In our opinion, nothing could redound more to the patriotism, national pride, and honor of our country, than the purchase, by Congress, of this rare collection of aboriginal curiosities, to enrich a National Museum at Washington. Such an object is by no means unworthy the attention of the nation; and as in the lapse of a few more years all traces of this interesting people will have passed away, or but a small remnant of them remain in their wilderness asylum almost beyond the ken of civilized man, such a depository of the relics peculiar to this wonderful people would possess an interest which would be immeasurably enhanced when their existence as a nation was forever blotted out, as from present indi-

cations it inevitably must be. Located at the capital, members of Congress and public spirited citizens of the far west could, from time to time, contribute to the common stock, until, in the course of a few years, a national museum of Indian curiosities would be formed, to perpetuate their manners, customs, and costumes, that would be a monument to the taste and public spirit of the nation to the latest generation. The facilities possessed by the government for the successful prosecution of so noble a design commends it forcibly to the consideration of Congress.

From the Philadelphia Evening Star.

### *Catlin's Indian Gallery.*

This interesting museum of curiosities, collected by Mr. Catlin during a residence of more than seven years among forty tribes of Indians, and of sketches painted by him, illustrative of their habits and customs, is now exhibited at the arcade in this city. It is an eloquent and illustrious witness of the genius, disinterestedness, and toil of the person who brought it together. Those productions of Mr. Catlin's pencil, which were given to the world many years since, evinced his ability to rank, at some day, with the first artists of this country; but instead of devoting himself to those lucrative branches of his profession, which would have gained him a sure return of wealth, he resolved, at the bidding of an enthusiasm perhaps inspired by the legends of his native valley of Wyoming, to dedicate his life to the great and generous purpose of presenting to his countrymen a satisfactory portraiture of a nation which had so interesting a connexion with their own history, and whose condition had always produced so strong an impression upon the imagination of Americans. Alone and unsupported, save by a dauntless spirit, he turned towards the western forests to seek the Indian in his boundless home—

"The general garden, where all steps may roam,  
Whose nature owns a nation for her child,  
Exulting in the enjoyment of the wild."

The perils of more than an Ulyssean voyage were encountered before the artist could feel that his object was accomplished, and before he would permit himself to return to his family and friends.

We have devoted much time and a close attention to the sketches which Mr. Catlin has brought back; and we are convinced that severe as were the labors and privations to which he was subject, they were less than the value of this collection. Whoever will study the numerous and varied representations here given of savage life, and will reflect how complete a picture is presented of a most peculiar and unknown race, will be persuaded, we think, that no greater accession has been made to the sum of human knowledge and human entertainment, in this age and country, than is produced by this museum. The philosophy of Indian character is revealed with curious distinctness by one portion of the paintings, while another class presents the picturesque of that existence with singular spirit. Many striking suggestions for the history of civility, and many valuable metaphysical considerations, are prompted by a survey of these illustrations of the intelligence and the instincts of this people; and any man who would taste the poetry of this wild life, will find enough to satisfy him in the animated exhibitions of the hunt, the march, and the fight, which are here brought before his eyes.

From the Philadelphia Gazette.

*Catlin's Indian Gallery.*

We could scarcely recommend a more pleasing and instructive collection than this to the notice of the community. It is what only a Catlin, with his enthusiasm and perseverance, could have accomplished. To him the study of nature is most appropriate in her great hall or cathedral :

That vast cathedral, boundless as our wonder,  
Whose quenchless lamps the sun and moon supply ;  
Its choir the winds and waves ; its organ, thunder ;  
Its dome the sky.

The boundless woods have been his home, and dwellers of the wilderness the sitters for his art. So far as Indian life is concerned, the reader will find a little of everything in Catlin's gallery ; not of faces merely, but of grand western life and scene.

From "The World."

*Catlin's Indian Gallery.*

Mr. Catlin's advertisement does no justice to the character of his collection. He does not state himself. He is a person of lofty genius and disinterested ambition, and he has abhorred to tarnish the purity of his self-respect by even claiming his own.

An attentive examination of his museum has led us to the opinion that this is one of the most striking triumphs that the pencil has ever achieved ; for while the brush of Lawrence preserves the likeness of an individual, that of Catlin has perpetuated the portraits of a nation. Let every American visit this exhibition ; let every one who would be informed or entertained, give it his protracted study. The more it is examined, the more it will gratify.